

Bath and North East Somerset Library Service: Strategic Framework (Finding the way forward – Area Forums 2016)



Bath & North East
Somerset Council

LibrariesWest





“Our ambition is a council which is efficient and well run, invests in the future and puts the interests of residents first in everything it does.”

The Council’s 2020 Vision

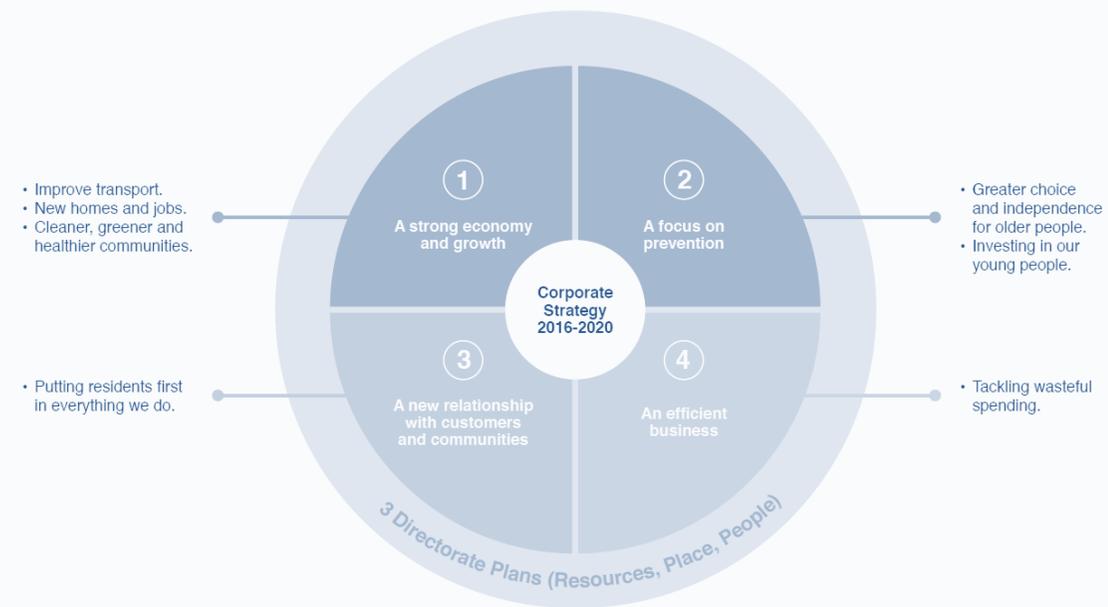
‘Bath and North East Somerset will be internationally renowned as a beautifully inventive and entrepreneurial 21st century place with a strong social purpose and a spirit of wellbeing, where everyone is invited to think big – a ‘connected’ area ready to create an extraordinary legacy for future generations’ (2020 vision)

Corporate Strategy 2016-2020

Is the overarching strategic plan which sets out the Council’s direction of travel over the next 4 years. It describes how we will deliver our 2020 vision for Bath and North East Somerset and how we will build on our progress and create efficiencies through innovation, improving the way we work and increasing income.

In order to achieve our ambitious vision for the area, four corporate priorities have been identified which will drive the work of the Council going forward:

Corporate Strategy Priorities





Did you know? Bath and North East Somerset is committed to encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service and to lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area

Facing the challenge

Few library services have escaped spending cuts and Bath and North East Somerset is no exception. Financial pressures continue to set the agenda, but there are other important factors determining policy and driving change.

Our libraries - real and online - serve a changing society with shifting habits and priorities. Speed, convenience, 24-hour availability and easy access are what most people want from a 21st Century library.

Bath and North East Somerset will continue to develop universal library services to meet modern-day customer lifestyles and preferences. At the same time we must provide services that meet the needs of each community, plus more targeted services for those who need them most - including the more vulnerable and disadvantaged in local society.

Shaping the future

Libraries play a key role in supporting the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities, offering a service that supports people in fulfilling their potential through learning, access to information and IT, enabling and encouraging literacy, and functioning as community spaces which everyone values and uses.

Greater community involvement in service delivery will ensure that libraries play a role in community prosperity and are resilient & sustainable to thrive in this changing & evolving world.

Our priorities are to remain relevant to our wider customer base, but to drive down costs and to improve efficiency. In future there will be more focus on working with individual communities and on designing services to meet their needs.



Delivering Strategic outcomes that promote;

Connectivity & Inclusivity

Access to computers and Wi-Fi; guided access into digital services

Access to other council services, partners / agencies, digitally & face to face

Access to books & resources for learning, enjoyment, education, knowledge and information

Meeting spaces, formal and informal from small groups to larger community / council / cultural events

Strong Social Purpose & Spirit of Wellbeing

Access to information & resources for all to increase their potential employability and work readiness

Access for all to support and information to lead healthy and independent lives

Promotion of and contribution to health and wellbeing initiatives

Delivering support for key life events and encouraging social inclusivity & community resilience

Where everyone is invited to think big

Appropriate, comfortable spaces suitable for all, with responsive and proactive staff, that promote personal enquiry, discovery and development

Environments hosting the expertise to promote reading, improved literacy, curiosity and research particularly to children, families and young people

Facilities & resources for children & young people including activity spaces for school workshops, study & out of school clubs

An impartial place to meet, plan debate & cultural enrichment

Beautifully Inventive Entrepreneurial 21st Century places

Spaces to promote community cohesion, social interaction, economic opportunities, greater employability, business growth and enterprise

Spaces for browsing, cultural exhibitions, performance and appreciation of literature, music, film, and visual art

Flexible & adaptable to meet future changes in patterns of use or interests, through expansion or diversification



The National Changing Picture

Libraries are changing - between 2010 -2017

400+ libraries closed

Including 140+ mobile library services

A further 200+ removed from council service

16,000+ additional volunteers recruited

Nearly 10,000 library jobs cut (nearly a third of the work force)

Unpaid staff posts now outnumber paid staff posts 3:2

But still very important - latest statistics (2015-2016) reveal:

177 million books loaned

211 million visits to libraries in England

Libraries are Protected by Law

2010 Equality Act

Section 149: Public Sector Equality Duty

1998 Human Rights Act (incorporates European Convention on Human Rights)

Article 8: Right to respect for private & family life

Article 10: Right to freedom of expression & information

Article 14: Prohibition of Discrimination

Public Lending Right

Copyright

Public Libraries & Museums Act 1964

More than the total attendance at English Premier League football matches, cinema admissions in England and the top 10 UK tourist attractions combined
www.gov.uk/government/publications/annual-report-to-parliament-on-public-library-activities-during-2016
www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-35707956

Digital Society

The Government continues to drive 'digital by choice' – which means it is publishing more information and conducting more transactions, including welfare benefits, online.

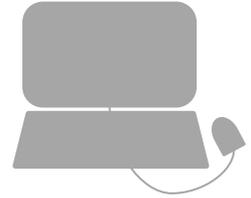
Bath and North East Somerset's 21st Century Library Service has a key role to play in making sure people are not left behind. So we want to support the communities in promoting digital literacy enabling digital by choice.

All our One Stop Shops, libraries and the mobile library already have free public computers and internet access supporting access to information and services online in life-critical areas such as careers and job seeking; health, personal financial information and benefits.

Library members can also use the LibrariesWest website and LibrariesWest App 24/7 to search the catalogue, reserve and renew items.

Digital support will be provided to ensure that local people without a computer or the internet at home, or those who lack the skills or confidence to use them, are not excluded.

Did you know? Bath and North East Somerset Library members have access to 2.5million items through the shared LibrariesWest catalogue And App.



Volunteers

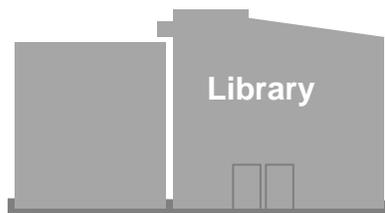
Volunteers are no longer supplementary, but a key component supporting the delivery of local services.

Meaning:

- Widening & enhancing existing volunteer programmes.
- Developing and defining the roles of volunteers.
- Initiating engagement and training programmes to ensure that volunteers are fully supported in their role.

More than 130 volunteers already give their time to Bath and North East Somerset run libraries, supporting trained library staff to deliver a variety of library services.

Where we are now



Eight Council run Libraries across the area.



Four Community Libraries managed by local groups or organisations.



One Mobile Library visiting 38 distinct communities, with 86 stops over a two week rota.

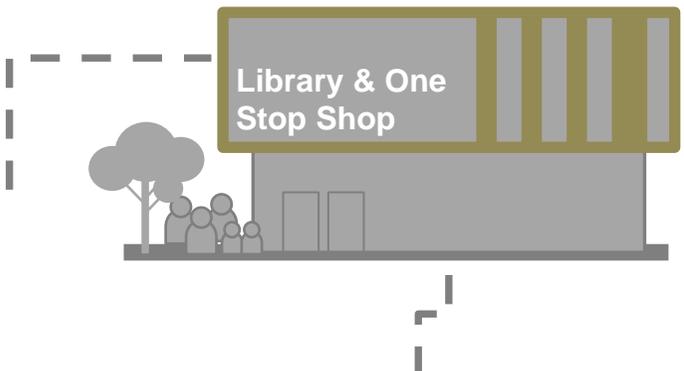


Electronic self-service systems and a virtual library service providing 24-hour access to library catalogues, e-books and e-audio books downloads, renewals, reservations and information.

Did you know? We also have a volunteer run Home Library Service which is available to anybody who is unable to get to their local branch or mobile library stop.

Integrating our libraries and Council One Stop Shop services including those provided by our partners and the voluntary sector, provides a primary multi-agency destination for learning, encouraging literacy, access to advice, information and IT. All supporting the community to fulfil their potential in an inclusive and accessible environment.

We are doing this already in Keynsham

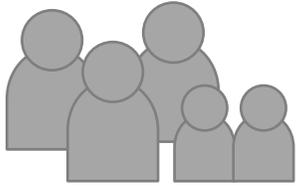


Together we work with an increasing number of partner organisations and share premises to provide access to a wider range of local services under one roof.

This is both convenient for customers and more cost-effective.

Did you know? All existing Council run and Community Libraries are operated by a combination of trained library staff and a dedicated team of volunteers.

What next?

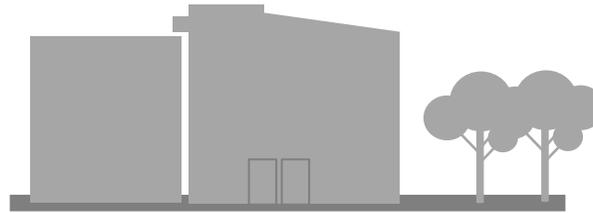


People

Bath and North East Somerset Library Service will have to make more savings over the next three years.

So we need to target our resources to where they are most needed and can do the most good. We will:

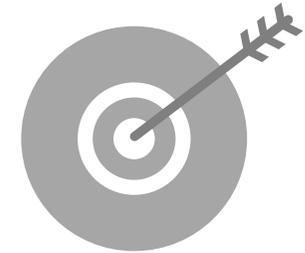
- Concentrate efforts on both ends of the age spectrum – children, young people and older people.
- Focus on services to help the housebound, the unemployed, people with health issues and those who lack computer or internet skills.



Places

In future there is likely to be less emphasis on separate library only buildings and more focus on providing a wider range of local services - potentially through a network of community run spaces or places. We will:

- Work with communities to understand their needs and find the right solution & model for them.
- Ensure that our communities have the support they need to enable them to meet the needs of the local people.
- Continue to find opportunities for integration of services to offer multi-agency delivery

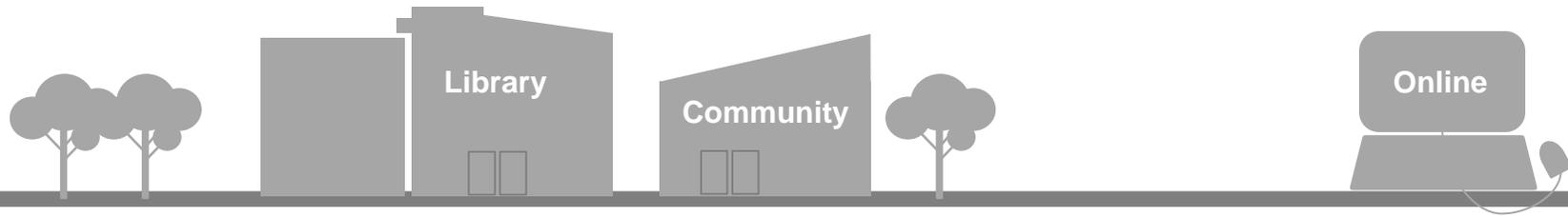


Principles

Resources and services will be targeted effectively and efficiently, to deliver strategic priorities and outcomes.

Library Service development will be guided by these key priorities. We will:

- Uphold our statutory duty for the provision of library services & encourage usage.
- Promote the wider library offer as well as the provision of access to a wide range of free books and reading material for all.
- Make the most of digital technology & creative media to support innovation & life improvement.
- Ensure that libraries are resilient & sustainable to thrive in this changing & evolving world, acknowledging that one size does not fit all.
- Support business growth & enterprise by developing community skills & learning.



Community Run Library Models -

Option 1 – **Supported** Community Run Library

- Running costs all funded by local group
- Book stock and professional support from B&NES.
- IT 'starter' provision
- Access to Libraries West Consortium stock.
- Eligible for Community Library Fund Grant
- Suitable for new and existing provision in priority areas
- Will be included in B&NES library statistical reports

Option 2– **Independent** Community Run Library

- Running costs all funded by local group.
- Book stock supply and management at local level.
- Able to receive B&NES stock (ex-catalogue).
- Professional support from B&NES available through networking & training events.
- Would help access funding, e.g. crowdfunding, but not CLF?
- Would be considered Independent

The plan



LEARNING OFFER



DIGITAL OFFER



INFORMATION OFFER



READING OFFER

In summary, we aim to:

- Provide safe spaces & community cohesion
- Provide information, support and signposting for our most vulnerable residents
- Support economic growth by encouraging people back to work and encouraging greater prosperity
- Help everyone achieve their full potential through learning and access to information
- Provide cultural and creative enrichment
- Increase reading and literacy
- Improve digital access and digital literacy
- Improve health, wellbeing and happier lives
- Create stronger, more resilient and more prosperous communities

A more collaborative approach, working closely with internal and external partners, will help to drive down costs, improve access to services and increase the impact they have on our communities.

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